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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

LIN, JERRY

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1631

DATE MAILED: 11/03/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/964,059

Applicant(s)

FRUDAKIS, TONY NICK

Examiner

Jerry Lin

Art Unit

1631

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 August 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-17 and 19-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-17 and 19-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 8/19/2004 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-3, 5-17, 19-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

4. Claims 1 and 15 recite the limitation "prestored gene family data" in the fourth step. The term "prestored" is confusing because it indicates that there was some storing of data before the fourth step. This storing step could take place outside of the method as in a archival database, or it could have taken place specifically for this methodology. However, there is nothing in the method steps that initially stores any gene family data. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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5. The term "acceptable lengths" in claims 2 and 16 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "acceptable" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

6. The term "sufficiently close" in claim 3 and 17 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "sufficiently close" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

7. Claim 12 recites the limitation "a prestored nucleotide base identifier." The term "prestored" is confusing because it lacks clear antecedent basis as to whether this is a comparing step directed to the prestored gene family data of claim 1 or whether an unconnected prestored nucleotide data is meant. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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9. Claims 1 and 5 - 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hwang et al.

Hwang et al. teach a method of processing gene sequence data by reading gene sequence data (p.3345), identifying primer pair data within the sequence and using a computer program such as blast to identify primer pair data (p. 3345, p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2), specifying the primer pair for a predetermined annealing temperature (p. 3346, column 2), ensuring that the primer pair does not match the prestored gene family data (In this instance, Hwang et al. found a 3'-primer that did not match the gene family data of PLP-C β genes, which allowed him to only amplify one isoform.) (p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2), storing the data (p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2), repeating the steps (p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2), and amplifying the coding sequences (p. 3346, column 2; p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2) of three or more individuals (i.e. three or more strands of DNA which is present after the initial PCR amplification of PLP-C β , p. 3346).

Hwang et al. also teach sequencing with a computer using the blast family of programs and DNASIS which contain nucleotide base identifier strings represented by G, A, T, and C (p.3345).

Hwang et al. also aligned the identified sequences and compared aligned nucleotide base identifiers (p.3345; p. 3349, paragraph bridging column 1 and column 2).

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

12. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

13. Claims 15, 19, and 20 - 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hwang et al.

Hwang et al. is applied as above.

According to the MPEP Section 2106, Part VI, "merely using a computer to automate a known process does not by itself impart nonobviousness to the invention. See *Dann v. Johnston*, 425 U.S. 219, 227-30, 189 USPQ 257, 261 (1976); *In re Venner*, 262 F.2d 91, 95, 120 USPQ 193, 194 (CCPA 1958)." Claims 15, 19, and 20-22 are merely computer automations of claims 1, 5 – 8. Thus, it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to use a computer to automate the known processes disclosed by Hwang et al.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-3, 5-17, 19-28 are pending.

Claims 4, 18, 29-45 are cancelled.

Claims 1-3, 5-17, 19-28 are rejected.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerry Lin whose telephone number is (571) 272-2561.

The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Woodward can be reached on (571) 272-0722. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JL

Ardin H. Marschel 11/1/04
ARDIN H. MARSCHEL
PRIMARY EXAMINER